Abstract

This diploma thesis describes the origins of harm reduction (HR) in the Czech drug policy. It focuses on the role of HR in national strategies and the development of syringe and needle program and substitution treatment. The aim of the thesis is to describe and explain how the HR approach was developed in the Czech environment. Using the framework of policy diffusion, the author explains the mechanisms by which harm reduction was transferred from abroad. Thesis describes the history of drug policy and the development of the harm reduction approach in the world. This information forms the context in which the author advocates HR development in the Czech Republic's drug policy after 1989. By analysing expert texts and expert interviews she explains how the first national strategies were formed in which HR has been included since 1993. Similarly, it deals with the beginnings of syringe exchange, which has been in operation since 1986, and substitution treatment that was first used in 1992 and has been officially operational since 1997. The mechanisms of diffusion of HR from abroad to the Czech Republic are defined. In all three areas, the mechanism of learning is defined. Substitution treatment and national strategies are also defined by the mechanism of emulation. To a lesser extent, a mechanism of coercion can be identified for substitution treatment.